

## darling, you gotta let me know by callunavulgari, hiza-chan (callunavulgari)

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**Summary:**

Jonathan's room is messy the same way that Steve's is. There are dirty socks and shirts and underwear strewn across the floor. Cassette tapes litter the desk like miniature landmines. There's a notebook open on his bed, a textbook and a pencil beside it. He must have been studying when Steve knocked.

Steve's palms start to sweat. For a moment the only thing he can think of is whether Jonathan uses flash cards too.

He opens his mouth and says, "Why's there still a hole in your wall?"

## darling, you gotta let me know

### Author's Note:

Stranger Things was pretty awesome. I had poly feelings after that last episode, so I wrote stuff. I'm just happy that I'm writing again.

It's the week before Christmas before Steve musters up the courage to visit.

It's not... he and Jonathan were never friends. Never even close to friends. It wasn't like it was with Nancy. With her they'd just run in separate circles. She was perfect in every way and Steve wasn't. He threw parties when his parent's were away, she was home in time for dinner. He was straddling the line of flunking two separate classes and she was on the honor roll. He'd lost his virginity in the back of his dad's truck when he turned fourteen and she was a virgin. He was popular and she wasn't.

But she was pretty enough that when she'd turned his head, his friends hadn't batted an eye. Much.

Jonathan isn't like Nancy. He doesn't *have* a circle. He's a complete and total outcast. Doesn't even have any friends. Being seen with him in public would be social suicide.

But there are some things that are bigger than who will and won't like you in high school. Like standing with your back to someone and fighting for your life. Like seeing the fear-sweat bead against their brow and watching their shoulders round with determination anyway. It's the flick of a lighter and the whoosh of flames.

So he's here. Later than he should have been, maybe, but he's here. On Jonathan's doorstep for the second time in less than two months, staring intently at the paint chipping off the door.

There's still a hole in Jonathan's wall.

A black tarp flaps in the wind like a startled bird and there's clearly

some half-assed patching done, but it's December. Without the insulation, he can't even imagine how drafty the house must be. He's still frowning at the hole when the door swings open. Quickly, he tears his gaze away, trying to school his expression into something less judgey, and plasters on his best smile.

Joyce Byers has always been a tiny slip of a woman. Dark hair, dark eyes, nervous smile. He never knew her well, but it was a small town. People talked. He knew that her husband was a loser and he still left her. He knew that she worked at the shop in town and was still so poor that she could barely feed her kids. That people whispered about her being crazy well before Will disappeared.

Something has steeled her spine in the last month. He doesn't know if it was losing Will or if it was the nightmare world... what was it that they called it? The Upside Down. Whatever it is, there's a glint of something in her eyes now that wasn't there before. The nervous smile is gone. Before last month, he wouldn't have even noticed the difference, but Steve's restructuring the way he views things.

When she smiles at him now, it's startled, but pleased.

"Steve," she says warmly, ushering him in with a wave of her arms. "Come in, come in, it's freezing."

Steve smiles back and hesitantly steps inside.

He was right. It's almost as cold in the house as it was outside.

Joyce bustles past him, straightening couch cushions and nonchalantly kicking a pile of clothes under the table as she goes. It's charming. His mother isn't a horrible one by any measure, but there's something altogether different about seeing mothers in their natural habitat. Like viewing a channel he's seen a hundred times through a fisheye lens. The same, but skewed.

"Would you like some cocoa?" she's saying, quickly leading him through to the kitchen. He's grateful for the hectic way she moves, because it doesn't give him enough time to pause and stare at the spot in the hallway where they nearly burned something alive.

She tips a jar back, squinting in and making a face. She shakes her head. "Nevermind," she amends, glancing back at him over her shoulder as she reaches blindly across the counter, fingertips skittering spider like across the formica. She lets out a triumphant noise when she locates her prey, and shakes the coffee pot in his direction. "Coffee?"

"No, thank you," he says politely, crossing his arms behind his back. His fingers stutter in a halfhearted rhythm against his wrist. Nancy should be here with him. She'd be better at this than he is. Jonathan can bullshit his way through most things, but it's hard to bullshit a parent.

Especially one that he wants to like him.

She blinks at him twice in quick succession, her head tilting in an almost insectile manner, and then startles. "Oh! You want to speak to Jonathan, don't you?"

He smiles again and hopes she doesn't notice the way he's sweating. "That would be nice, ma'am."

She swallows, nodding as she gropes around the counter until her fingers brush up against a pack of cigarettes. She pulls one out, still nodding, and moves to light it. The flick of the lighter makes him twitch, the gush of flame small, but distracting. She inhales gratefully, pointing to the hallway behind them with the cigarette. "He's in his room."

Steve bites his lip. Yeah. He'd been afraid of that.

God knows how Jonathan even lives here, where every little thing can't help but remind him of that thing. Of what they'd done. But fuck it. If Steve could walk back into this house before, when he'd known there was a creature looking to eat him, he can damn well walk down a hallway that ends in Jonathan Byers' bedroom.

God. Nancy should be here.

He smiles at Joyce again and thanks her, already moving quickly away. He has to step over the spot where the bear trap had been, and

keeps his eye on the door to Jonathan's room instead of the carpet.

Steve hesitates when he reaches the door, knuckles just shy of brushing against the wood. There's music playing in Jonathan's room, the lazy strum of a guitar mingling with garbled lyrics that he can't quite make out. It strikes him as odd that despite everything, he's never once considered that Jonathan might like music. That he might even like the same type of music that Steve does.

He shakes his head and knocks.

The way Jonathan's eyes widen when he answers the door is somehow gratifying. Steve had come to him before, wanting to apologize, for everything - he'd been coming apart at the seams, ego crushed, ridden with guilt and the need to just make everything better. He'd been panicking then, before he'd even realized what true panic looked like.

And Jonathan hadn't even been the one to answer the damn door.

"Hey," he says, grimacing at the crack in his voice. Nancy definitely should have been here. But she'd been very clear that this was something he had to do on his own.

"Hey," Jonathan says, his eyes skating past Steve and out into the hall, as if he expected someone else. Maybe he thought that Nancy should be there too. Or maybe he was just expecting the same monster that Steve was.

Steve swallows, rolling his fingers against the doorframe. Tap tap tap. He can recognize the band now that the door isn't muffling the sound anymore, the crackly vocals and the rolling bass. It's a good song. Maybe they really do have the same taste in music.

"Um," he says. "Mind letting me in? This hallway still freaks me out."

Jonathan steps backwards too quickly, stumbling over a shoe that had been on the floor behind him, and Steve reaches out and catches Jonathan around the wrist just as he's starting to tilt. Steve doesn't have to exert himself - just his hand around Jonathan's is enough to steady him - but that leaves them blinking at each other owlishly.

Touching.

Steve lets go as if burned and steps inside.

Jonathan's room is messy the same way that Steve's is. There are dirty socks and shirts and underwear strewn across the floor. Cassette tapes litter the desk like miniature landmines. There's a notebook open on his bed, a textbook and a pencil beside it. He must have been studying when Steve knocked.

Steve's palms start to sweat. For a moment the only thing he can think of is whether Jonathan uses flash cards too.

He opens his mouth and says, "Why's there still a hole in your wall?"

Jonathan blinks at him, his mouth parting in disbelief as a spark of anger blooms to life in his eyes. Waspishly, he says, "When you're very, very poor-"

Steve grimaces, rushing to cut him off. "Sorry, sorry, that's not what I meant to say. I meant- are you, that is to say, I wanted to ask- um. How have you been?"

The fire is starting to go out, but Steve still doesn't let himself get more than two steps away from the door. Escape routes. It's the first thing that he does when he walks into a room now, eyes darting back and forth until they find all the possible exits. He doesn't want to think about what that means.

"Good," Jonathan says.

"Good."

Steve swallows. The silence is mortifying. Next time he's bringing Nancy with him, no matter what she says. "Your uh, your brother. He's been better?"

Jonathan nods. "Yeah. Yeah. He's been good." He grimaces, shaking his head. "No, I mean, he's not good. Not really. He has screaming nightmares and he can never get warm, no matter how many layers he's wearing, but he's, uh. Better."

Steve's mouth twists in sympathy. He has nightmares too. And if his are bad he can't imagine how horrible Will's are. The kid was in there for days. If Steve were him, he doesn't think he'd ever know how to be normal again. But he can't really tell Jonathan that, so he nods.

"That sucks."

They drift into awkward silence again. The Clash plays on in the background. Steve wonders what else Jonathan and he have in common.

"Sorry-"

"I-"

They both stop, staring at each other. Jonathan's mouth twists into something that might have been a smile, if Steve squinted. He gestures magnanimously with a wave of his hand. "You go ahead."

"Sorry," Steve tells him. "I mean, that's what I wanted to say. I didn't really get to before and I haven't really seen you since, so I just. Thought I should say something."

Jonathan stares at him. It's a considering sort of stare; the one that Nancy uses when she wants to make him uncomfortable. On Jonathan it's working twice as well. "Which part are you sorry for?" he asks curiously.

"All of it?"

Jonathan's lip does that half-tilt thing again. Schrodinger's smile. "Are you telling me or asking me?"

"Telling, definitely." Steve nods and paces in a very short, tight circle. He doesn't get out of range of the door. "I'm sorry for breaking your camera and saying all that shit about you and your family. I'm sorry for Nancy. I'm just. I'm really sorry. I was an asshole."

"You were."

Steve licks his lips. He deserved that. "I just. Look, I can fix your wall, okay?"

The not smile widens. Jonathan says, deadpan, with a hint of disbelief. "You can fix my wall."

Steve bites his lip. Hesitantly, he nods. "Yeah. I just, I wanna help. I want to make things right. So let me do this." He pauses, then adds encouragingly. "At least this way you won't freeze your balls off when the first snows hit."

Jonathan stares at him some more. Eventually he nods. "All right, then," he says. "Fix my wall."

He doesn't say 'I dare you.'

Steve hears it anyway.

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Nancy has a gun tucked into the very back of her closet now. It's wrapped in a thick, mustard-yellow scarf that once belonged to her maternal grandmother and shoved between her old Barbie's Dream House and a stack of shoeboxes that exist solely to contain her old artwork, each box precisely dated with the school year she'd been in when she'd drawn it. The gun is nestled between first and second grade.

It isn't actually her gun, but it isn't as if Jonathan's asked for it back yet. So she keeps it.

Each night she removes the gun from its hiding spot and places it beneath her bed. For two weeks, when she wakes from a nightmare, groggy with sleep and dripping in fear-sweat, she practices drawing and loading it. By the end of the three weeks, it's sheer muscle memory.

At the beginning of the third week, she starts sleeping with her window unlocked.

Most nights, Steve doesn't show up. He either sleeps through the night or doesn't deem it necessary to cross town to crawl in through his girlfriend's window, seeking solace in her arms, whether it be with sex or more sleep.



But at least once a week, she'll wake to the creaky sigh the frame gives when Steve slides the window open. The first few times it happens, he ends up with a gun pointed in his face for his troubles. Eventually, she stops registering him as a threat and turns into him when he crawls into her bed.

If she's awake enough, he'll touch her, his knuckles grazing her nipples beneath her shirt until they harden, his other palm leaving gooseflesh in its wake as it skims over her belly, fingers shaking as they dip inside of her. They've perfected the art of quiet, and know all the places where her bed creaks too much, or the stretches of skin to avoid touching. They'll get each other off with hands and mouth, too exhausted to muster enough energy for the actual act. Other times, when they're both too awake for sleep, she'll roll over, her body sleep warm, and slide onto him, or he'll kick apart her thighs and work his way into her, and they'll rock together until they can sleep again.

They sleep. It helps.

Most of the time.

Tonight, when her window slides open, something is different. She welcomes him anyway, holding her arms out to him as he shuts the window behind him and tumbles into her bed. He smells strange, different, but familiar.

It takes her a moment to place it, and by then, he's already whispering the answer into her hair.

"Did you know that Jonathan Byers has a hole in his house?" he asks her, arms going round her belly.

"Still?" she asks sleepily, rubbing her cheek against the ball of his shoulder.

She can tell without opening her eyes that he's making a face at her bedroom wall, brows puckered with concern, mouth a downward slash. "Yes, still."

Nancy shrugs. Jonathan is her friend. They've spoken several times

since Thanksgiving, each time more lackluster than the time before. She's beginning to suspect that it's impossible for them to have a conversation without one of them being in danger.

But never once has he struck her as the type of person to react well to someone pointing out the shortcomings to his home life. He has an amazing mother and a great kid brother. They're just poor.

"So you spoke to him then," she says, cracking her eyes open and squinting at him in the darkness. He's so close that the only thing she can make out is his hair. It's very messy, as if he's been running his hands through it constantly.

He sighs, breath gusting out against her scalp. "I did."

"And?"

His arms tighten around her. "And I offered to fix his stupid wall."

She laughs at him, her cheeks scrunching up in delight until she has to press her face hard against his body to stifle the noise.

"You're adorable," she tells him when she has breath again, leaning up to kiss the tip of his nose.

He grumbles and rolls her, until the weight of his body is comfortably blanketing hers. All the breath that she'd recovered leaves her in a rush of heady arousal, so sudden and blistering that it startles her. She shivers, parting her legs and throwing her head back when he rolls his hips against hers. She's worn a gown of cheap, pink cotton to sleep, and hikes it up to her waist now, letting him roll her underwear down her thighs.

He has a condom with him, which she watches him roll onto himself with heavy-lidded eyes. He glances down at her and smiles when he sees her watching. It's a sweet smile, not the one he uses for buttering people up, and she's thankful for that. This is more real.

He drops down onto her and kisses her collarbone, reaching between her legs to smear the wetness before he starts to push inside. It's a smooth slide and they both grunt once he's fully inside, pausing to catch their breath. Steve looks at her, brushing a curl of hair from her

face and dropping a kiss on her brow. Her heart flutters, muscles contracting around him as she shudders. With a low groan, he starts to move.

They don't talk much, during.

But after, when they're lying there, halfway to sleep, she asks, "What do you think?"

He doesn't try to pretend that he doesn't know what she's talking about. He shifts against her, arms going around her waist once more. He's quiet for a moment as they settle into a comfortable position, then sighs. "About Byers?"

She nods.

"I think that we'll find out," he says. "But you're going with me next time."

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For Christmas, Nancy gives Jonathan a polaroid camera. It's a nice one, and he spends hours fiddling with it, just to see how it works. He snaps a few shots to try it out. A couple of his mom smoking in the kitchen. A ball of Christmas lights tangled on the floor. One of his brother, smiling over breakfast. Another of a smudge of burned carpet in the hallway.

He knows that the camera isn't from Nancy alone.

Three days later, Steve Harrington shows up on his front porch for a second time, Nancy half a step behind him.

When Jonathan opens the door and stares at them, Steve smiles apologetically and says, "I'm not actually here to fix your wall this time."

This time implies that there will be a next time, Jonathan thinks.

He carefully avoids looking at both of them, keeping his eyes glued to the borderline offensively green collar of Steve's shirt. He clears his throat. "Then why are you here?"

They exchange a look that's so thick with unspoken words that he can almost see the shape of the conversation in the air between them. His fingers itch for his camera.

Nancy steps forward, a determined expression taking root in her features. He's familiar with the look. She'd worn it a lot the month previous. "We wanted to see if you'd join us for lunch."

Jonathan swallows, his eyes darting from Nancy to Steve then back again.

"Lunch," he croaks. He sounds like he just swallowed an entire jar of cotton balls.

"Lunch," Steve parrots with a nod, lifting a picnic basket over his head and shaking it enticingly. "We brought sandwiches and soup."

"Though we'll have to eat it inside," Nancy chimes in. "Unless you'd rather brave the elements."

Jonathan stares at them some more. They've gone crazy. That has to be it.

Nancy shifts on her heels, going up on her tiptoes and craning her neck to look around the side of the yard. "Is your family not here?" she asks, curiously.

Jonathan licks his lips. They're with Hopper. Will needed additional testing done at the hospital and Jonathan couldn't be there because he had work early. They probably won't be home for awhile. Hopper usually takes them out for ice cream.

"No," he says simply, and opens the door wider. Then he turns around and heads back inside, leaving the door open behind him. If that isn't an invitation he doesn't know what will pass as one.

He should stop in the kitchen or the dining room, or maybe even the living room, but he can't stand the thought of seeing them there again. It's hard enough to live in this house as it is, with the memories chasing him in dizzying circles each night. But he can't see the two of them standing there without smelling the lighter fluid, feeling the creeping sensation of being hunted. The living room is for

danger. His bedroom is safety.

He doesn't look back to see if they step over the charred stretch of carpet too.

He bites down on the urge to apologize for the mess when they reach the bedroom and crosses to his desk instead, doing a very minimal amount of kicking laundry under his bed. He feels as if he's under a microscope anyway. Before, they were in mortal peril. Nancy didn't exactly have time to notice his dirty laundry. Steve was too panicked to make fun of him for the Gumby sitting on the corner of his desk.

Now, they're aware. And looking.

The moment the door clicks shut behind Steve, Jonathan realizes that he's made a mistake. With him taking up the seat at his desk, there's only one place left for them to sit.

They don't bat an eye, Nancy seating herself primly on the edge of the bed as Steve crawls onto it behind her, placing the picnic basket down between them. Jonathan makes himself focus on Steve, the way his fingers are curling in Jonathan's unmade sheets, how his expression changes as his gaze travels along the perimeter of the room. How he leans against Nancy's side, brushing his fingers along her waist in passing, as if the gesture is so common that it might as well just be a 'hello, I'm here.'

The air feels heavier with them here, sitting on his bed. His palms are sweaty.

He hates having to talk to people, and hates it even worse when he's the one who has to start the conversation, but it looks like he's going to have to.

"So," he says into the strange silence between them. "Lunch?"

Nancy jumps, her eyes jumping away from a trophy on his shelf. For a moment, they make eye contact, and he feels like she's touched him with a live wire. Quickly, he tears his gaze away.

The sandwiches are mostly peanut butter and jelly, with the exception of a single bologna sandwich that looks like it was

assembled in three seconds. The bread is torn slightly and the meat is half slipping out of it. There are no condiments. The soup is chicken noodle.

“We uh, realized last minute that you might have been allergic to peanut butter,” Steve says by way of explanation, pointing to the sad bologna sandwich with his perfectly assembled PB&J. A dollop of jelly lands on Jonathan’s comforter.

Steve grimaces and swipes it off with his thumb, popping it into his mouth and sucking the digit clean. “Sorry.”

“Here,” Nancy says, holding a cup full of soup out to him.

“Thanks,” he mutters, taking a quick sip of the soup.

“It’s Campbell’s,” she tells him quickly, biting down on her lip as she nervously screws the lid of the thermos closed, then opens it up again. Repeat. “Sorry it isn’t anything fancy. Turns out that neither of us are very good at cooking.”

We. Us. Them.

God help him.

“It’s okay,” Jonathan tells her knees. “It’s warm.”

The room descends into another awkward silence as they chew, avoiding each other’s gazes. It’s pretty ridiculous, Jonathan thinks, that he can face down a man eating monster and the nightmare world it’s from, but still can’t look a pretty girl in the eyes.

He wants to know what they’re doing here. Why they brought him lunch. Why Steve came to his house a couple weeks ago and offered to fix his wall. Why the camera. A month ago, he would have assumed that they were being cruel, but now he doesn’t think so. More likely is that they feel a sense of camaraderie now, and for some reason feel obligated to maintain this farce of a friendship after the danger has passed.

He doesn’t know how to tell them that isn’t necessary without sounding like an asshole.

It isn't as if Jonathan likes having no friends, but he definitely doesn't need them.

"Okay," Nancy says, setting her sandwich aside. "This is ridiculous."

She gets to her feet, turning her eyes on Jonathan. When he flinches away from her gaze, she reaches out and takes hold of his chin, her palm cradling his jaw as she gently turns his face back towards hers. She looks at him, fierce, and unafraid, and he wants to cower away from that look. Recoil from the contact, maybe take a picture and return to scrutinize what exactly that look means at a later date.

She doesn't let him. Her hand is soft, but the grip she has on his chin is sure, steady.

She really is beautiful.

Slowly, she leans down, until her hair is a heavy curtain around them. Her breath smells like peanut butter. She swallows, her eyes dropping away from his for a moment, dipping down to--

Oh.

Oh.

Jonathan fists his hands in his jeans, gripping tight until the thick fabric across his thighs is pulled taut. He does not look at Steve. He can't look at Steve. Why hasn't Steve *said* anything? He licks his lips and watches her pupils dilate, how the black eats up all that blue, her breathing coming more quickly. Her grip on his chin wavers, but he doesn't look away.

"Is this okay?" she asks quietly, her breath ghosting across his lips.

He wants to look at Steve. He can't look at Steve. Is this okay? Is it really?

Instead, Jonathan swallows, and nods.

She kisses him.

It's-- he doesn't know what he expected. He's thought of it, obviously.

But he's never really considered what it might actually be like.

Mostly, it's chaste. A press of lips against lips, skin against skin. Hers are soft, his are chapped. They press and drag, and everything is very mechanical until something changes. Her lips part on a sigh, and then there's heat. Wetness. A smooth glide that sparks pleasure down his spine.

His fists tighten against his thighs, his dick twitching. He wants to pull her closer -- to pull her into his lap, where he can touch and press and kiss everything she'll offer him. Wants to touch her waist, feel the curve of her hip, and wonder at it.

He jumps at the feel of a hand on his, and tears away from her, panting, eyes wide, and it's Steve. Steve, who in the span of seconds, at a single touch, Jonathan completely forgot existed. He's pushed himself to the very edge of the bed, reached out to cover one of Jonathan's hands with his own.

As Jonathan watches, Steve smiles at him, his eyes dark and crinkling as he pries Jonathan's hands off of the front of his pants. He holds them, brushing his palms against Jonathan's knuckles as if he's trying to soothe the kinks from them, smooth them out. And then Steve takes them, and puts them on Nancy's waist.

"Touch her," Steve says. His voice is scratchy and low, heavy with intent. His hands aren't as soft as Nancy's, but they're softer than Jonathan's, not yet thick with calluses from long, taxing days at a low paying job. His fingers are long and slender, and when Steve pulls away from them, they drag against the backs of his wrists, as if reluctant to let him go.

Jonathan glances back up at Nancy, who's been watching attentively, and licks his lips. They planned this. This is why they brought him lunch. This is- this is-

His hands clench in the fabric of Nancy's skirt, grip firming on her hips as he pulls her down into his lap, where she settles in a flurry of fabric, her thighs bracketing his. The chair creaks alarmingly under them, but he can't be bothered to think about anything else right now. He'll deal with it if it breaks, but not until then.



She's still watching him expectantly and Steve said to touch her so Jonathan--

Touches.

He slides the palms of his hands up her sides, ghosting them up and over her ribs, framing them, feeling where the softness of skin and muscle gives way to hard bone where her rib cage starts, how each breath she takes pushes her body more firmly into his hands. She makes a noise when he reaches her breasts, shuddering when he cups them, even through the fabric.

"Please," she breathes, and Jonathan hesitates, unsure of what she wants.

"Here," Steve murmurs, taking hold of Jonathan's hands once more. He guides them to the buttons of Nancy's blouse and pauses, waiting, as Jonathan undoes them himself, his touch sliding down Jonathan's forearms then back up again.

Jonathan pushes the blouse from Nancy's shoulders, watching the blush that blooms under his eyes, going from her throat clear to her navel. Her cheeks are flushed too, her eyes black and *wanting*.

Steve lets go of him, maybe realizing that Jonathan won't be of much help at this moment, and his hands vanish around Nancy's sides, quick and darting. It isn't until he's helping her pull her bra loose that Jonathan even realizes what he's done.

Steve's hands go back to his, guiding them to Nancy's breasts. The skin is firm and supple, and so very warm. Her nipples pull tight when his hand brushes them. Steve leans close to Jonathan's ear, and whispers, "*Touch* her."

Jonathan does, leaning in to press a kiss to the topmost swell of her breast, where it's just starting to curve outwards. Her breath catches, and he glances up at her from under his lashes, eyebrow raised.

He kisses her again, lower, and she cries out, throwing her head back.

"There you go," Steve whispers, his breath hot on the back of Jonathan's neck. "I think you can do better than that, don't you?"

Jonathan kisses her nipple, softly at first, just a little pressure. Like the kiss. Almost chaste. Then he opens his mouth, letting in the heat and the wet, and sucks it into his mouth, rolling the nub of flesh against his tongue.

Steve laughs and rewards him with a kiss to the side of his throat. "Better."

Jonathan's pulse quickens. His cock jumps.

"I think," Nancy starts to say, breath hitching for a moment before she gets it under control. "That we really ought to move this to the bed."

"Mm," Steve murmurs, reluctantly sliding his mouth away from Jonathan's throat. "I approve."

Jonathan doesn't say anything. He can't. He knows how to swing a bat, how to light a monster on fire, and now he knows how to kiss a girl. And not just any girl. He knows how to kiss Nancy Wheeler.

He lets Steve pull him to his feet, only half aware of the way that Steve crawls onto the bed after him, his eyes on Nancy stepping out of her skirt and underwear.

Slowly, Jonathan realizes that Steve is murmuring something lowly into his ear, his hand hovering over Jonathan's zipper.

"What?" Jonathan asks. His ears are stuffed full of cotton.

Steve chuckles, and it's a nice sound, so Jonathan turns to look at him.

"I said," Steve says, clearing his throat with minimal awkwardness when his voice cracks. He pushes his fingers against Jonathan's cock through the fabric of his jeans, grinding the heel of his palm there until Jonathan gasps. "Is *this* okay?"

Jonathan looks up when the bed dips, but even the sight of Nancy, fully naked and on his bed, can only distract him from the pressure against his cock for so long. He nods frantically, throat clicking uselessly when he tries to speak.

Jonathan watches Steve lick his lips, his adam's apple bobbing as he swallows.

"And what about this?" he asks softly as he flicks the button of Jonathan's jeans open. The long, slow slide of the zipper is torture.

He slips his hand inside Jonathan's pants, only to stop just shy of Jonathan's cock.

"C'mon," Steve urges, flicking the tips of his fingers against the head. "I want to hear you say it."

Jonathan trembles. Whispers, "Yes."

Then, "Please."

And finally, when he can't take it anymore, "*Touch me.*"

Steve's fingers wrap around him, stroking steadily, and someone's lips touch the back of his neck. He thinks it might be Nancy, because Steve is busy shoving Jonathan's pants down his hips and murmuring encouragement in his other ear, but he could be wrong.

Maybe he's just that out of touch with reality right now. Maybe this isn't even happening.

His shirt is gone. When did that happen? Who took it off of him? Nancy's nails trace down his side as he shudders under Steve's steady grip and he feels-

He feels full. Full of something intangible, bloated with *feeling* and affection and- maybe he's just clogged with all the things he isn't saying.

Nancy is in his lap again, and then she's under him, Steve's fingers guiding Jonathan's dick smoothly into her. It's heat and wet and pressure, and he can't keep up. He never had any hope of not being overwhelmed by this.

Steve kisses his throat, his jaw, and by the time he catches him by the lips Jonathan is coming, crying out against Steve's mouth as Nancy rides out his orgasm.

He was never going to last long, not with both of them.

Steve gently rolls Jonathan over, dipping down to kiss him again, short and sweet, before pulling away. He doesn't go far, only shuffles the foot or so to where Nancy's still spread open, watching them with a fond smile on her face. She squeals when Steve pounces on her, laughing openly as he kisses all over her throat and down her chest. Jonathan gets to watch the way her face goes still when Steve slides inside of her, how her chest goes quiet and motionless before it heaves twice as huge on her next inhale.

Jonathan had known that they'd done this before. After all, he was sort of a witness to it. But up close it's something else, it's poetry in motion, the way that Nancy's head tips back, the bead of sweat that slides down the tip of Steve's nose, how her legs wrap around his waist, her small feet locking at the dip of Steve's spine.

It's beautiful, and his fingers itch for his camera, so he fumbles around beside him, stretching his arm out to his desk until he catches the strap and can tug it into his hands. He watches them through the lens of his camera for a moment before he gets up the courage to touch, tapping Steve with his foot and then gesturing with the camera, head cocked.

Can I?

Steve's entire face transforms when he laughs, going bright with emotion. He nudges Nancy until she glances over and then she's laughing too, and they're both nodding.

He catches them both mid laugh, naked limbs flung around each other. And then he catches the moment that the laughter turns to something else, mouths half-parted in breathless pleasure. He catches the curve of Nancy's breast and the freckle behind Steve's ear, and then he waits, breathless, for the right moment.

He waits and waits, and the moment that they both go still, bodies shaking with pleasure, mouth caught on soundless moans-

Click.

He swallows, lowering the camera as it spits the picture out with a hiss, and holds it in his hand, watching them. Their eyes are closed, breathless little smiles across their faces, sweat on their brows. Steve hasn't even pulled out of her.

Click.

Nancy's smile grows and she slants her eyes open, giving him a look. It's too exhausted to be very threatening, but he's come to the realization that Nancy Wheeler, even exhausted and fucked out, is still probably a force to be reckoned with.

He takes another picture anyway.

"Jonathan Byers," Steve grumbles into her collarbone. "If you don't put the camera down and join us for the afterglow I'm not giving you a blowjob before we leave."

Jonathan swallows, slowly lowering the camera, his eyes wide. He lets the polaroids go, not turning to watch as they slide down the comforter to settle against the floor.

Sometimes, he thinks, settling down next to Nancy, the right moment might just need to be had outside of the lens of the camera.